THE BARRIER OF BLOOD.

By WM, LE QUEUX.

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there is much truth in this; | mies, to every rule there is an exin every tribe of the Touaregs, se of the Tidikelt to those of the Adrar, are to be found men who are not | that while this war continueth she is our thieves or evil-doers, even though they may

Those acquainted with the progress of re- hath already been given." cent events in Algeria will remember that oth of the great Atlas range. Ascrossed the high sun-baked lands of the Tademayt, then, passing up the rocky waterless vailey of the Miya, traversed the region of bare red sandhills known as the Erg, and argia fifty miles to the east, set

In ordinary circumstances we should never have dared to approach so near the French influence, especially as the region of the Beni-Mzabs who guarded any encreachment upon their territory. But war had been declared against the infidel, and the Shorfa (faithful) were uniting beneath the green banner of Al-Islam. At high noon we halted, and soon afterwards there appeared a French colonel with a large escort of his scarletburnoused Saphais. The officer, who had ridden from Metilili to intercept us, was received courteously by Tamahu, our but the proud old man whom I have since succeeded answered, "Tell that lord of yours, that if he wants our taxes he can come for them himself, and we will make sure he gets them, in silver coins, too, for we will roll each franc into a bullet, and deliver it to him ourselves." The colonel declared that the taxes must be paid, but our sheikh courteously requested the infidel and his horsemen to return to the town. "Then you intend fighting?" the colonel

"We do," answered Tamahu. "Tell thy lord that The Breath of the Wind decline to make submission to the French."

"You intend attacking Metlili?" the officer inquired, thoughftully, twirling his pointed mustache.

Our sheikh nodded, his keen eyes watching the face of the infidel. The latter's countenance grew grave, whereat we, standing around leaning on our spears, laughed "Thou art of the great army of the

infidels," Tamahu said. "Yet thy face palest when we speak of conflict!" The officer started, and I nit his gray

"I fear not thine host of veiled men, fierce and relentless though ye be. True,

I am a soldier, but one thing alone I dread." "Thou fearest to lose thy life," observed our sheikh, knowing that the garrison at

that little desert town was but small and "For myself I care nothing," the colonel answered. "It is the fate of my daughter

that I fear." "Thy daughter! Why, is she here, in the desert, so far from Algiers?"

"Not having seen me for four years, she traveled from Paris a moon ago to visit me. Both my captain and my lieutenant have died of fever, and we two are now the only Europeans in Metlili. The rising of thy tribesmen hath occurred so unexpectedly, or I would have sent her under escort back to

"Is thy daughter a child?" asked Tamahu. "She is nineteen," answered the officer, whose name he informed us was Col. Bonnemain. We at once knew him by repute

as a distinguished traveler and soldier. "Thou knowest what is said of the word of a Touareg," the sheikh said, regarding

him keenly.

"Canst thou trust these my tribesmen with the escort of thy daughter?" Tamahu asked. "If thou wilt, no harm shall befall her. We have agreed with the Mzabs to attack and pillage thy town, because thou, with thine horsemen, hast established a post therein; therefore, it must be done. But the find safe asylum within our camp."

ing intently into the dark, bright eyes of truth mirrored in his face, the infidel held out his hand, and in silence more eloquent than words gripped that of his enemy. At last his tongue's strings became loosened.

"Henceforth, although I am an officer of the French, and compelled to fight against thee, I am nevertheless thy friend, and some day will prove my friendship. Gabrielle shall be within thy camp at dawn."

"The Azjares will give her the welcome of friends," answered our sheikh.

With a brief expression of heartfelt thanks, Colonel Bonnemain vaulted lightly into his saddle, and, wishing us "peace," spurred away to where his troop of expectant Spahis

"May Allah guard thee and thine," answered Tamahu in response to the infidel's salutation, and a moment later our enemies were riding hard away toward the far-off

The long breathless afternoon went slowly by. We had not encamped, because we knew not when our allies, the Beni-Mzabs, might approach, and rapidity of movement was of urgent necessity, inasmuch as a formidable French column was on the march. Sped by long travel, the majority of us stretched ourselves on the hot sands and slept, leaving half a dozen to act as sentinels and prevent surprise; but at the maghrib hour all were awakened by the clear voice of our aged marabout reciting the fatihat. Every man, without exception, knelt upon the sand, his back turned upon the blaze of crimson in the west, and recited the suras, praying to Allah to pros-

When we arose Tamahu, his right hand raised to heaven and his left grasping his gleaming spear, exhorted us to remain faithful and to bear arms bravely against

"Ye are called forth against a mighty and a warlike nation," he exclusimed. "Ye shall fight against them, or they shall profess Islam. If ye obey, Allah will, of a verity, give you a glorious reward; but if ye turn | number had we now assembled that those back he will chastise you with a grievous spoils, which ye should take; and he giveth these by way of earnest; and he restraineth the hand of man from you; and the same

sory of a great victory.

Throughout our breathless land of sun and . Long and earnestly the old sheikh adsilence there is a well-known adage that the | dressed us, quoting from our Book of Ever-Veiled Man is like water poured lasting Will to emphasize his declarations. which, when once dropped, is Then he referred to the compact he had recovered. I am, alas, compelled | made that day with the leader of our ene-

> into this our camp. Remember, O my people, that she will partake of our salt, and friend. Let not a single hair of her head be injured. The word of the Sheikh Tamahu

That evening we spent in sharpening our brothers, the Kabyles, rose against | spears and shangermangors, preparatory to asters, the French, and commit- the fight, singing snatches of war songs and rrible massacre at Al-Setlt, news discussing the prospects of the attack. Pertly circulated over every one of haps of all the tribes in the trackless soli-Saharan plains that the forces of | tudes which constitute our home, we of the ad at last risen against the in- Azjar are among the most active, vigorous for the fray most of the desert | and enterprising, inured as we are to hardthem the Touaregs of the ships, and with our mental faculties sharp-Haratin and Kel-Owi, or "Peo- ened almost to a preternatural degree by Light," united against the the hard struggle for existence in our arid Hence, we of the Azjar pressed rocky fastnesses. The rearing of oxen, force in order to unite with the horses and goats is our chief occupation, eal-Mzab in a formidable attack but the scarcity of water and our speedy French posts at Gardaia and exhaustion of the scanty pasturage of the oases keep us perpetually on the march. Agthe El Gettata osis we left our riculture is scarcely possible under a sky men and children encamped, from which rain does not fall for six or eight consecutive years; therefore, it is, perhaps, not surprising that we have developed into desert-pirates.

Those who have never set foot upon the Saharan plains can possess but a vague heads towards Metlill, halting idea of their appearance. In the whole of the great desert, a tract comprising over two million square miles, there is not a single carriage road, not a mile of navigable waters, not a wheeled vehicle, canoe, or boat of any kind. There are scarcely even any beaten tracks, for most of the routes, though followed for ages without divergence of any kind, are temporarily effaced by every sandstorm, and recovered only by means of the permanent landmarks -wells, prominent dunes, a solitary bush, the remains of travelers, slaves, or camels that may have perished of thirst or exhaustion between the stations.

> Long and patiently we waited for the arised protection; but although the night passed, the dawn rose, and the hours crept on toward the noon, our vigilance remained unrewarded. A second day passed in inactivity, then, wearied of waiting, we struck camp and moved forward.

> The afterglow had deepened into evening dusk when at length we came within sight of Metlili. Looming high up on a pinnacle of rock, white against the clear sky, its appearance astonished us, for it looked impregnable. Its flat-roofed houses rose tier upon tier around an exceedingly steep eminence crowned by a great mosque with high, square minaret, while at the foot of the hill were some scattered date groves.

> We had passed over the summit of a sand ridge, and were making a dash straight upon the French stronghold, when we noticed that our presence had already been detected. Upon the walls a few Saphis in scarlet and some white-burnoused Arabs were moving hurriedly. Suddenly there was a flash from the Kasbah, followed by a report, loud, sharp, echoless. Our enemies had opened fire upon us.

> Tamahu instantly gave the word to spur forward on the wings of haste. With one accord we rode in a huge compact body so swiftly as to justify our popular appellation, "The Breath of the Wind," and, regardless of a rapid rifle fire that was poured out from the white walls, pressed forward to the foot of the rock. Here we dismounted, and with loud yells of savage rage dashed up the rough, narrow way that gave entrance to the town. Many of my companions fell dead or wounded ere they reached the hastily barred gate, but by dint of flerce and dogged determination we managed to at last batter down the huge wooden doors. Next second we poured into the place in overwhelming numbers. Up its steep streets, so narrow that two asses could not pass abreast, we engaged Saphis and Zouaves hand to hand. So strong was our force that soon we overwhelmed them and commenced loud cries of triumph as we dashed up toward the Kasbah. Suddenly, however, as we approached it we saw that its walls literally swarmed with French soldiers, who, at the word of command, fired a withering volley from their rifles which

caused us to hold back dismayed. Colonel Bonnemain had evidently received reinforcements. With their firearms they were more than a match for us.

"Courage, brothers!" I heard Tamahu cry as he brandished his spear. "Let us show these dogs of infidels that the Touaregs are no cowards. Of a verity the Roumis shall never be our masters."

With set teeth we sprang forward toward the high sun-blanched walls of the citadel, determined to take it by assault, but alas, its battlements were full of wellarmed Spahis and Turcos, and from every point showers of lead swept down upon us. main. He was standing upon the wall bareheaded, shouting and waving his sword. But only for an instant. He disappeared.

and was seen no more. Almost at the same instant a loud incessant spitting of guns deafened us; bullets swept through our ranks in deadly hail, killing us by dozens and maiming hundreds. Then, dismayed, I saw mounted on the wall a strange-looking weapon, which once charged shed rifle balls in hundreds. Death seemed inevitable. My companions, appalled by the sight of that terrible engine of destruction, wavered for an instant, then, with a cry that Eblis was assisting the in-

fidels, turned and fled. Above the din of battle Tamahu shouted himself hoarse. But darkness having now fallen none could discern him amid the dense smoke and constant flashing of the guns. Thus the defenders drove us back, sweeping us away with their deadly machine gun, and making a sortie from the

fortress, bayoneted the more valiant ones. Our cause seemed lost. As soon, however, as we had drawn the Spahis outside their fort, we turned, and re-engaging them handto-hand, quickly hacked our way back to the very gates of the Kasbah, the streets in the vicinity being heaped with dead and dying. Suddenly, however, at the moment we were relinquishing our hope as a forlorn one, loud shouts, followed by the beating of tamtams, gave us renewed courage. From mouth to mouth the glad tidings were repeated. The Beni-Mzabs, one of the most powerful tribes on the desert border, had come up, and being our allies, were rendering us assistance.

Of the exciting moments which immediately succeeded, I have but vague remembrance. Suffice it to say that the warlike race of the Atlas, to the number of two thousand, poured into Metlili, and with our forces combined we succeeded in dislodging and totally annihilating the French garrison. Everywhere throughout the town

fighting quietly became general, but in such holding the Kasbah were compelled to sue chastisement. Allah has promised you many for peace. The Beni-Mzabs declined, however, to give quarter, consequently the scenes of bloodshed were terrible to behold. Before dawn the sack of the town had commay be a sign unto the true believers; and menced, and everywhere the firebrand was he guideth you in the right way. Allah applied. The loot obtainable was, we found. knowest that which ye know not, and he of very little value, nevertheless, both the scul this delicate Roumi, whose fair face hath appointed you, besides this, a speedy Beni-Mzabs and our own tribesmen were in the sun had never kissed. high glee at their first success against the | Was it not in order to behold my counte- I unhappiness unto us both."

Just as the sun was rising I was inside

Spahis and Beni-Mzabs, while some of the wounded were still groaning, dying slowly, for there had been no attempt to succor "A woman of the Franks we shall receive the disabled. To fall in a holy war is not a misfortune, but the reverse. The noise, a loud knock, again sounded, and turning I saw a bolted door, which I at once opened and was confronted by a pretty dark-haired French girl, who, glancing at me in terror for an instant, screamed and fled down a flight of stone stairs into an impenetrable

> In a moment I dashed after her. Already the Kasbah had been set on fire, and to save her life instant escape was necessary. Below, in the small, foul stone chamber, used long ago as a prison, I discovered her, crouching. She screamed loudly at my approach, fearing me, perhaps, because of the mysterious black veil across my face, and knowing that the veiled men were of

"Thou art Mademoiselle Gabrielle, daughter of our friend, Colonel Bonnemain," I exclaimed in the best French I could prticulate. "Fear not, but fly at once with

gasped in amazement. By the climmer of I saw that her face was beautiful, but deathly pale. "True, I am the daughter of Colonel Bonnemain, but thou art a Touareg. Assuredly thou art our enemy, not our friend. Why, it was thine hosts who

Briefly I explained the promise of our Shelkh, assuring her of our friendship. At first she was inclined to doubt my sincerity, but at length I prevailed upon her to acburning ruins. Quickly we sought Tamahu, and as there were no women with us she was at once placed under my protection. I was to be her guardian and her champion during the remainder of hostilities. Long and earnestly we both searched and inquired for her father, the colonel, but could discover no trace of him. Some of his Spahis, who survived, declared that he had been struck down in the earlier hours of the conflict, while others maintained that they | | had seen him fighting uninjured up to the very last. From our inquiries it appeared | evident that, on receiving unexpected reinforcements from the north, he had determined upon holding out against us, and overlooking our agreement with the Beni-Mzabs, was ill-advised enough to decline our good offices. Then, when he found an attack in force being made, he locked Gabrielle in a place of safety until the fight

Full of excitement were those days that followed. I must, however, here confess myself deeply attached to this bright-eyed, fragile girl, whose gallant father had disappeared so mysteriously. We of the Azjars, leaving the prosperous town of Metlili a mere pile of smoking ruins, encamped for a few days in the vicinity where there was an excellent well, then together with the flerce horsemen of the Beni-Mzab set our heads toward Wargla, another French outpost. At first Gabrielle felt the fatigue of travel terribly. Fortunately, she could ride well, and, as her inseparable companion, I endeavored to render her journey as comfortable as possible. At my suggestion she had exchanged her European clothes for the serroual and haick of the Arab women, finding that mode of dress more comfortable and less conspicuous than her own; and so light-hearted she grew that not infrequently she would join me in a cigarette. Her face and manner charmed us all. The fierce horsemen of the Azjar and the Beni-Mzab are scarcely chivalrous where women are concerned, but ere we had been on the march three days there was not a single tribesman who would not execute her

Riding day by day over the breathless solitudes of sand, no single word of complaint ever escaped her. Whenever we halted, before she ate she would busy herself in attending to our wounded; sometimes bandaging an arm or a leg, at others pouring out water and handing it to a thirsty man with a pleasing smile that quickened his pulse. Then, after we had eaten and turned our faces to the Holy Calaba, she would take an old Spanish mandolin which one of my companions had picked up cheap long ago in Oran, and play and sing to us in a sweet contralto song from her own far-off Paris. They were mostly gay chansons, such as one hears in the cafes in Algiers, and those with refrains were sung lustily in chorus by the whole of the great assembly.

One night after she had given us several songs I persuaded her to dance. To those unaccustomed to life in the desert the scene would have appeared a strange one. The bright moonlight shining full upon her, tipped also with silver the keen heads of a couple of thousand spears upon which her audience leaned. She had fascinated them. was an enchantress. Only one fact remained to mar her happiness; her uncertainty regarding her father's fate.

"I will dance on one condition, Ahamadou," she answered in French, throwing | upon the warm sand near her, and snatched back her pretty head and showing her white a brief hour's repose, not however, before I teeth as she laughed.

"What is that?" "I will dance if thou wilt take off that hideous black veil. Thou hast been my friend all this time, yet, strangely enough, I have never beheld thy face."

I hesitated. Such a demand was unusual for a Topareg never removes his veil. My companions overhearing, and noticing my disinclination to acquiesce, with one accord urged me to accede, and at last, amid much good humor, I unwound my black

Long and earnestly she looked into my

eyes. Her gaze lingered upon me strangely. love. I thought; then suddenly clapping her hands, she raised her long white arms above her head, and to the thumping of four derboukas, one of which I held, she commenced a slow graceful dance. Never tired of exerting herself to comfort the weunded cr amuse those who were her father's bitterest foes, she danced on until she sank completely out of breath. Then she reclined upon the soft rugs spread for her, and, with Tamahu and myself, smoked a cigarette in silence. From her full red lips she blew clouds of smoke, and watched | thing." it curl upward in the still night air. I glanced at her furtively, and saw that she had grown unusually thoughtful. Her brilliant eyes were fixed upon the stars.

At last, pillowing her handsome head upon a leopard's skin I rolled and placed for her, she wished me "peace," and presently closed her eyes in sleep.

Silence, dead and complete, had fallen upon the camp. The stillness was only broken by the uneasy groaning of a camel or the soft footfall of a sentry whose spear gleamed afar in the white moonbeams. Gabrielle's heart slowly heaved and fell as she slept. Through that calm night I sat, hugging my knees and tainking deeply. Try how I would. I could not get rid of the one thought that for days had porsessed me, the thought of her. That she had entranced me; that she held me in her tolls irrevocably I could not deny. Never before had I locked upon any woman with affection until row. But I loved with all my heart and

Just as the sun was rising I was inside the ancient citadel so recently the infidel stronghold, and was exploring its many courts with their old blue-tiled fountains and cool, handsome colonnades, when suddenly, as I passed beneath an archway in the thickness of the wall, a noise startled me. My companions in arms were regaling themselves in an open square before the great white mosque, therefore I was alone. Around me lay many bodies of Touaregs Around me lay many bodies of Touaregs Speaks and Beni Manhs, while some of the startled means of the startled means and positions are startled means and positions in arms were regaling themselves in an open square before the great white mosque, therefore I was alone. Around me lay many bodies of Touaregs Speaks and Beni Manhs, while some of the startled means are the startled means and positions in arms were regaling to the startled means and positions in arms were regaling to the startled means and positions in arms were regaling to the startled means of the startled means and positions in arms were regaling to the startled means and positions in arms were regaling to the startled means and positions in arms were regaling to the startled means and the startled means are the startled means and the startled means are the startled means and the startled means are the startled means are the startled means and the startled means are the startled means and the startled means are the startled means are the startled means and the startled means are the



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nance she had that evening requested me showed plainly that she did not regard me with disfavor. The moon waned, the stars paled, and dawn was right ere I cast myself had carefully placed a rug about her, fearing lest the morning dew, so deadly to must not be. We must not love, for we can Europeans, should chill ber.

One bright, balmy night we reached El Okaz, and halted. It was a large oasis with running water, luxuriant vegetation, and many palms. When the maghrib had been said, the evening meal eaten, and the sun was slowly sinking. I went forth among the | fully. trees to search for camel grass, and invited Gabrielle to accompany me. She walked by my side, and when we were out of hearing I took her tiny hand in mine, and, raising it reverently to my lips, declared my

Slowly but resolutely, she drew her hand away. The last ray of sunlight tipped her hair with molten gold as we stood together beneath a great high palm. Her brilliant eyes glistened with unshed tears. "Alas! no. Ahamadou," she answered

huskily. "We must not love each other, it would wreck both our lives," "Why not?" I cried passionately, my arm around her waist, her slim white hand raised again to my lips. "I adore you. To

me thou art my life, my love, my every-

"Ah, yes." she sighed sadly. "To you I owe my life. You have all been so good to me, although I am a woman of the Franks, that I can scarce believe that you are actually the Azjars, the dreaded Breath of the Wind, reports of whose exploits have times

without number caused me to shudder.' "An Azjar never forgets a favor nor forgives a false friend," I answered. "To our enemies we are brutal and relentless; yet, those who eat our salt need never fear. Al- | become my husband. From to-night, Ahamready hast thou had experience of the treatment the stranger receiveth within our | further sign."

"True," she answered, her hand closing tightly over mine. "I have had experience "Yet thou hast already grown tired of our

life?" I hazarded reproachfully. "Ah, no," she said quickly, fixing her brilliant eyes upon mine. "Thou hast asked if I could ever love thee. I tell thee that I do love thee, yet there is between us a barrier of blood, and such love can only bring

sun-browned hands, our lips met for the first time in a long, passionate caress.

Again she put me from her, saying: "No: it can never be. We are of different races, different creeds. What is right in thine eyes is sin in mine; what is worship to thee is to me idolatry. No, Ahamadou, it never marry."

ly unassailable. Never before had I faced the situation until now. She had, indeed, "But we love each other!" I cried, dole-

I was silent. Her argument seemed utter-

"Yes," she sighed, shaking her head; "I confess that I love thee," and her fingers again gripped my hand. "But it is the very fact that we love one another that should cause us to part and forget."

"Why? Until the war is ended thou must

of necessity, remain in our camp," I ob-

"Then we could return to Algiers, or to Oran, and marry."

She remained silent for a few moments, nervously toying with the single ring of emeralds upon her finger. "No," she answered at length. "This love between us is but a passing fancy. When

the war is at an end thou wilt have become

"Never." I answered. "I love thee now: I shall love thee always." "Alas!" she said, laying her head softly upon my shoulder, and loooking earnestly into my face; "now that we have both made confession we must endeavor to forget. We love each other, but the wide difference in

our races renders happiness impossible. Thou wilt find for wife some good woman of thine own people, and I-perhaps I shall find some man of mine own nationality to adou, if thou lovest me, thou wilt make no I bit my tips to the blood. Although she had attered these words, I saw that she

nevertheless loved me with a mad, passionate love, for soon down her pink cheeks "Thou art all to me-everything, Gabrielle," I cried. "Allah knoweth how deeply and honestly I adore thee, I--"

The sound of a rifle shot startled us. With bathed breath we both strained our ears. The evening gloom had crept on unperceived, and it was almost dark. In rapid succession other shots sounded, followed by

We had been surprised by the French! By the route we had come we sped back to the encampment, where we found all made a sudden and determined attack, but it had been repulsed. My first thought was of Gabrielle's safety. I found cover for her to seat herself, and not attempt to watch the progress of the fight, returned, spear in hand, to bear my part against our enemies. The cessation of the fighting was only for a few minutes. We heard the sudden sound

of a bugie, and from among the trees there

dashed a formidable troop of red-burnoused horsemen, led by a young European officer. who sat on his horse as if he were part of Even in that moment of excitement admired the way he rode. The charge was, however, an ill-fated one. Not half of those who dashed forward lived to retreat. The Arabs of the Mechefer, who had recently joined us, possessed guns, and the flashing of these, in combination with those of our enemies, illumined the darkness, while the still air was full of dense, stifling smoke More desperate each moment the conflict grew. Undismayed by loss or misfortune, we thrice returned their attack, each time with increasing force, until our bullets and keen spears commenced to work havoc among the infidel ranks. Fast and furious became the fight, but gradually the attack upon us grew weaker, and at last, deter-

mined upon reprisals, Tamahu ordered a

dash forward. With one accord we charged

and then before us the remnant of the ill-

fated troop fell back and fled to save their When I returned I found Gabrielle kneeling beside the officer whose riding had been so conspicuous, tenderly bandaging an ugly spear wound he had received in the left shoulder. She had improvised a torch, and beneath its fitful light was pursuing her task unconscious of my approach. Upon the clammy brow of the unconscious man she placed her cool, soft hand; then, having felt his pulse, she seemed satisfied, and taking her flambeau went forward to one of my own tribesmen who had been injured in the breast. From the deep shadow wherein I stood I watched her, white robed and fair, like one of the good genii of whom the Koran tells us, passing from one to another. alleviating their sufferings as best she could uttering cheering words, or giving water to the dying. I did not approach her, for my

heart seemed too full. It was best,

thought, to leave her alone to her merciful

Before the sun rose many of those whom he had so carefully tended and watched had drawn their last breath, but the young officer, whose name I afterward nearned was Andre De Freyville, deutenant of Spahis, had recovered consciousness sufficiently to thank his nurse and learn from her lips the curious circumstances which "ac led her to accept the hospitality of our tents. He proved a pleasant fellow, and during his convalescace we all three had frequent chats together. Although he was our prisoner of war, he soon became on excellent terms with Tamahu, and his time passed happily enough. Colonel Ponnemain had, he told us, escaped when Metil'i fell and had reached Algiers unharmed. on, in order to join forces with another large body of horsemen moving from the great Hammada, or stony tableau, in Tripoli, we advanced to the oasis of Meda-

"Thou lovest me!" I cried, delighted, and, the fierce fiendish warrry of the Beni- gin, two days' march from El Aghouat, Reaching Medagin at noon, we encamped. When the stars shone both Gabrielle and DeFreyville sang us some French chansons the one accompanying the other upon the mandolin. Before we scooped out our hollows in the sand to form our couches I borowed a gun from one of the Arabs, intending to go out at dawn to shoot some desert partridges in which the oasis abounds. Ere day broke I rose and leaving the whole camp in slumber, strolled away to a rocky spot I had on the previous day noted as a likely place to find the birds. It was on the edge of the oasis, at some distance from the well where we had en-camped. When I arrived there the sun had not risen, and the birds were still roosting. Therefore, with my rifle loaded with a bullet (for I had no small shot), I sat down

For perhaps half an hour I had remained when my quick ear detected the sounds of horses' hoofs. Believing the newcomer to be a French vedette I drew back behind a large bowlder, with the barrel of my rifle placed upon the top of the rock in readiness to pick him off as he passed. On came the horseman, until suddenly he emerged from among the miosas and euphorbias. An ejaculation of dismay involuntarily left my There was not one horse, but two. The riders were fugitives. They were our prisoner of war, Lieutenant De Freyville and Gabrielle Bonnemain, the woman

Mounted upon horses they had secured they spurred forward together at headle Their way on to the desert lay down a narrow stony ravine, to traverse which they would be compelled to pass close by the spot where I was lying in ambush. On they came swiftly, without a word. Inwardiy I gloated over my revenge. This man was stealing from me the wo an I loved dearer than life. And she had declared that she loved me! Yet her words were foul lies. She should die, I fingered the trigger, and held my gun to my shoulder, in readiness as the pair pressed forward, unconscious of their approaching doom. If ever the spirit of murder entered my soul, it was at that moment. When within a leopard's leap of the muzzle of my rifle she turned back toward her companion, uttered some gay words to him, threw back her head and laughed lightly. displaying her white teeth.

I raised my rifle and took deliberate alm at her panting breast. My hands trembled, Next second a flood of bitter recollections surged through my brain, I remembered those solemn words she had uttered: "We are of different races, different creeds. What is right in thine eyes is sin in mine; what is worship to thee is to me It is the very fact that we love one anoth that should cause us to part and forget." Yes, my enchantress had spoken the truth, My hands were nerveless. I dropped my gun, the weapon with which I had so nearly taken her young life, and through a mist of gathering tears watched her ride rapidly away beside her newly-discovered lover, and disappear over the dune toward El Agh When she had gone, my head sank upon my breast and my teeth were set, for full well I knew that never again could I love any woman as truly as I had loved her. My pole-star, the light of my life, had forever been extinguished.